

Recruitment and Marketing

Alycia Worden – 12th and Ashley Harris – 12th

Willow Canyon High School
Surprise, AZ

You Reap What You Sow

"I will pursue excellence in preparing to be a future teacher of Arizona. I hold to the highest standards and ethics and will uphold the mission and responsibilities of the Arizona FEA. I will represent myself, my school and the Arizona FEA with my best effort, attitude and commitment." This FEA motto also extends to the specific commitment placed upon members to market and recruit other future teachers so that they too can experience the extensive benefits of FEA. In the beginning, there were only two members in Willow Canyon's FEA chapter. We called ourselves "The few but faithful." We soon realized, that wasn't going to work and we needed to do something about it. We made a promise to one another to be fully committed to the recruitment process using the quote, "You reap what you sow" as a motivational phrase during this struggling time. With this being said, success would only be achieved through perseverance and dedication. After much collaboration, with this saying as our main focal point, we devised a marketing plan that would ensure the best possible recruitment outcome.

Unfortunately, FEA is not a very well-known association, therefore we strive to market FEA wherever we go and through whatever we do to maximize awareness. Our first plan of attack was geared towards future freshman within our district including events such as Future Freshman Night, I-Willow Camp, and the CTE Fair. Through these events, incoming high school students were given the opportunity to see what our school has to offer and possibly plan a future with FEA. We believe it's essential to always carry along the official FEA brochures which describe what FEA is and some of the benefits of the club. As well as, our personally crafted business cards with our contact information in case of

sparked interest. A partnership with all clubs available on campus was also very important to us. As a result, we have opened doors to people we wouldn't have met otherwise. Groups like DECA and Media Productions provided us with ample opportunities to market FEA through PSAs and the school store. Connections with Media Club allow us to put a slide up on our schools scrolling announcements whenever we had an upcoming fundraiser, marketing event or club meeting. The school store creates FEA marketing availability to help us fundraise and advertise. Yearbook club dedicates two pages to the school's FEA chapter and through this, students learn not only about the existence of the club but also the impact it has on its members. Another form of advertising is through posters. By placing posters throughout the school, and particularly in the counselors' offices, we draw attention to the club. We also acknowledged a good rapport with the teachers in our school. By attending and speaking at staff meetings, we gain their help and support in times of fundraising events. We make a strong effort to show our appreciation for their support during Teacher Appreciation Week in May.

Along with in school advertisement, we have realized the importance of reaching beyond the school by marketing to the community as well. Fundraiser events are obviously a huge opportunity to advertise our club. Dine-In nights, especially, can be used as a vessel to extend awareness of the association by using promotional items and simply by wearing FEA attire. When we volunteer or participate in service projects, we describe who we are and explain how part of our mission as FEA members is to get passionately involved in our community. The local elementary school and their PTSA rely heavily on us to be committed volunteers for their school events which creates a strong connection.

Combining all of these marketing strategies is the most efficient way to enhance our chapter's recruitment success.

Not only must we comprehend the significance of marketing in many diverse locations, but also the content distributed at those locations. This captivating content, comprised mainly of the benefits of being in FEA, serves as the basis in our recruitment process. FEA's uniquely devised curriculum could be geared towards a wide range of careers including teachers, coaches, counselors, pediatricians, and parents. This not only gives students early insight into a career of their choosing but also a head start through the option to receive college credit. FEA offers continual hands-on experience throughout the year in a K-8 classroom of their choice giving them the opportunity to determine their preference. On the more fun side of things, there are occasional workshops and training days in which we get to further our knowledge in the education field. FEA holds an annual officer training camp to ensure that we are upholding our responsibilities as officers and providing the best experience for our chapter. Our state competition in March, serves as a major incentive to always put forth our best efforts and remain committed throughout the year. This also could lead to an amazing opportunity to compete at the National Competition which could be held anywhere in the nation. Volunteering and participating in service projects is a huge way to give back to the community. Students get the opportunity to meet some incredible people and bond with other FEA members along the way. A day we'll always remember was when we wrapped presents and served food at the American Legion Auxiliary's 5th annual Christmas party supporting families with deployed parents. The event included a magic show, bounce houses, face painting, a petting zoo, dinner, and a gift from Santa for each and every child. Each of the 40 families that

attended also received a free turkey, \$100 in cash, \$50 in gift cards and a home cooked Christmas meal. Our chapter's Thanksgiving service project set out to show our appreciation for the firemen and policemen of our city. Due to our connection with the local elementary school, we were able to do this through hand-crafted thank-you cards made by students from Kindergarten to Eighth grade. Our FEA chapter is comprised of people who have a passion to work with kids in the future and a drive to work hard and put in 100% effort to reach their dreams. Being around those kinds of people, day after day, also fuels the passion within yourself.

"Without the rain, there would be no rainbows." (Mollie Fussell) We recognized our chapters' flaws which motivated us to resolve them in order to become a better and stronger unit. Lack of awareness and teacher-specific curriculum has hindered our club's membership. This motivated us to market FEA more frequently by partnering with other clubs and hanging up posters to generate more awareness. Some of these posters advertised our improvement of broadening the curriculum to the learning-of-kids in general and the necessary life skills needed to efficiently work with them. When both of these factors were mended, our chapter expanded tremendously. To continue the growth, we were encouraged to make the class available during the last period of the day to accommodate traveling members. Because of chapter expansion, our lack of funds was no longer an issue. We now had more people to help fundraise and create awareness. Even though the number of members rose, their willingness to get involved did not. We decided to create and implement a point system in which members would receive a certain amount of points for volunteering, completing projects, attending chapter meetings and workshops and other various FEA activities. In order to compete at state, we required a specific

amount of points to be completed before March. Because we had these issues, we were very focused on the now. We also wanted to create a good foundation for when future members take lead. Our previous officers left us with little-to-no support to successfully begin our chapter. That's why we understand, as president and vice president, that it is our job to ensure that future officers will start off with a strong footing.

Due to our tenacious, ongoing efforts, we were able to recruit ten more dedicated members, in which six were male. Fortunately, we were able to transform our chapter identity from "The few but faithful" to "All together, we are strong." It's sad to think, in only a few short months, we will be graduating, leaving FEA but we will do so with the assurance that what we leave behind will guarantee next year's success. We remember that this is not the end, but rather just the beginning!

"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed people can make a difference.

Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has."

-Margaret Meade